MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION St. Louis Region Community Conservation Funding Opportunities



Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) engages partners and provides opportunities for active citizen involvement in conservation efforts in urban communities. MDC offers two funding opportunities to support partner-led habitat improvement projects and connect communities to nature: The Community Conservation Grant Program and the Back To Nature StL Grant.

Applications to both grant opportunities should be relevant to the goals of MDC's Community Conservation Program:

- Provide support for terrestrial and aquatic habitat improvement in urban areas,
- Coordinate efforts among similar organizations which share the common goal of improving urban habitats and supporting community conservation efforts,
- Train partner organization staff in native habitat restoration and long-term management practices of sustaining natural landscapes, and
- Engage the public through conservation education and volunteer opportunities.

Proposals for these grant opportunities will be accepted until 5pm on September 12, 2014.

Proposal ranking

Proposals for both grant opportunities will be ranked based on the following criteria:

- Value and quality of habitat restoration or improvement activities
 - MDC grant funds must be spent on terrestrial or aquatic habitat enhancement.
 - Projects should have a detailed and realistic budget and timeline of project activities.
 - A long term plan should be included which describes management activities and responsibilities following completion of grant project to maintain habitat improvements.
- Partnerships developed, matching resources
 - Partners are defined as those organizations and entities which contribute financially or in-kind to the project. This does not include contractors who will be paid for services.
- Staff training and re-tooling
 - Long-term success of grant projects will depend upon the grantee staff knowledge and organization equipment necessary for managing natural landscapes.
 - Project implementation should include staff training on applicable topics such as invasive species identification and control; native Missouri plant identification; turf to native warm season grass conversion; forest, woodland, and prairie management; storm water solutions, etc. Applicants are encouraged to attend the variety of existing training and workshop opportunities available. Specialized training may also be contracted using grant funds.
 - Equipment necessary for project implementation and long-term management may be purchased with grant funds (up to specified limits).
- Visibility and outreach potential
 - Projects which are accessible to the surrounding community, involve volunteers, and have high visibility and potential for educational programming will receive a greater number of points.

Community Conservation Grant

Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants include (1) government entities (e.g., municipal and county parks departments, public schools), or (2) non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporations. Applications from schools must identify a full-time staff member as project manager.

Projects must be located in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County, or incorporated areas of Franklin, Lincoln, or Warren Counties.

Grant awards

The maximum request for grant awards is \$30,000.00. Funds will be distributed in March or April 2015 as a lump sum payment.

Preference will be given to projects which utilize match or in-kind contributions.

Eligible practices

Practices eligible for funding include land management activities necessary for habitat restoration such as: native plant establishment, terrestrial and aquatic habitat enhancement, and exotic species control, and staff training for natural landscape management.

Funding for equipment purchases must not exceed \$5,000.00. Equipment purchase over this amount may count toward in-kind contributions. Funding will not be granted for the development of educational materials or for administrative salaries.

Applicant ranking

The project applications will be ranked on a 100 point scale. Point allocation reflects the priority goals of the Community Conservation Grant Program:

- Value and quality of habitat restoration or improvement activities- 40 points possible
- Partnerships developed, matching resources- 25 points possible
- Staff training and re-tooling- 25 points possible
- Visibility and outreach potential- 10 points possible

See page 1 for detailed description of ranking criteria.

Grantee requirements

Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement, submit progress reports that include both a financial and narrative summary on progress toward project completion, and comply with all terms of the agreement. Projects implementation should be completed within 3 years of signing the grant agreement.

Assistance and questions

Grant applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the grant program coordinator (contact information listed on page 4) prior to submitting an application to discuss a potential project and the application requirements.















Back To Nature StL Grant

A special category of funding is available this year for habitat restoration and/or reconstruction on a public park property. This grant opportunity will be available every-other-year.

Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants include the park departments in St. Louis City and St. Louis County. MDC staff will meet on-site with the finalists at the proposed project location for the Back To Nature funds. Applicants should utilize the same project application, and indicate that the application is for the Back To Nature StL funds.

Applicants for Back To Nature StL funds who are not awarded funds can still be eligible for funding (at the lesser amount) through the basic Community Conservation Grant Program. *Applicants do not need to submit applications for both categories of funding.*

Grant awards

The maximum request for this grant award is \$50,000.00. Funds will be distributed in March or April 2015 as a lump sum payment. A match of 75:25 is required for this award. Applicants can meet the 25% match requirement through direct funding or in-kind contributions to the project.

Eligible practices

Practices eligible for funding include land management activities necessary for habitat restoration such as: native plant establishment, terrestrial and aquatic habitat enhancement, and exotic species control, interpretive signage related to the project, and staff training for natural landscape management. *Funding will not be granted for administrative salaries*.

Applicant ranking

The project applications will be ranked on a 100 point scale. Point allocation reflects the priority goals of the Back To Nature StL Grant Program:

- Value and quality of habitat restoration or improvement activities- 40 points possible
- Visibility and outreach potential- 30 points possible
- Partnerships developed, matching resources- 15 points possible
- Staff training and re-tooling- 15 points possible

See page 1 for detailed description of ranking criteria.

MDC staff will meet on-site with the finalist prior awarding funds.

Grantee requirements

Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement, submit progress reports that include both a financial and narrative summary on progress toward project completion, and host a community outreach event at the project site to inform park visitors of the habitat improvements. Projects implementation should be

completed within 3 years and be maintained for 25 years following the signing of the grant agreement.

Assistance and questions

Grant applicants are required to contact the grant program coordinator (contact information listed on page 4) prior to submitting an application to discuss a potential project and the application requirements.

Grant Coordinator Contact Information

Community Conservation Grant:

Erin Shank, Urban Wildlife Biologist Missouri Department of Conservation Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center 11715 Cragwold Road

Kirkwood, MO 63122

Email: Erin.Shank@mdc.mo.gov Phone: 314-301-1506 ext. 4207 **Back To Nature StL Grant:**

Angie Weber, Community Conservation Planner

Missouri Department of Conservation Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road Kirkwood, MO 63122

Email: Angie.Weber@mdc.mo.gov Phone: 314-301-1506 ext. 4213

Proposal deadline for FY 2015 funds

Proposals must be received by 5pm on September 12, 2014.

Grant proposals may be mailed or emailed as a pdf document to the appropriate Grant Coordinator. Please do not fax proposals.

The MDC Grant Selection Committee will notify applicants of their status by December 1, 2014.

MDC reserves the right to modify its procedures, standards and policies from time to time without prior notice and without the consent of applicants or others. While it is not the intent of MDC to inconvenience or disadvantage applicants, MDC believes it must retain the ability to adjust to changing legal, factual and experiential circumstances in discharging its statutory responsibilities and fulfilling the goals of the grant program.

In addition and for the same reasons, MDC reserves the right to reject any and all applications and to award such grants as MDC may determine to be appropriate from time to time. The points set forth in this application are not totally determinatives as to whether a grant is awarded. And MDC reserves the right to consider other factors in awarding grants.

PROJECT APPLICATION

Proposals must be received by 5pm on September 12, 2014. Please limit grant applications to 8 pages or less (not including maps or letters of support) and use the following format for grant applications:

1. Project basics:

- a. Title
- b. Lead organization
- c. Project manager (include all contact information)
- d. Amount of funding requested in this application—indicate if you are applying for the Back To Nature StL funds
- e. Total project budget

2. Project description:

- a. List project objectives, including acreage and habitat types involved.
- b. Describe activities/ land management practices and an associated timeline (grant funds will be distributed in spring 2015, and projects must be completed in three years following grant award). Include plant species lists.
- c. Include long term management plan describing how improvements will be maintained or managed following initial project completion. If the project includes invasive species removal, describe how the area will be retreated to control regrowth.
- d. Include map/aerial photo or sketch of the project site (hand drawn maps are acceptable).
- e. If this project received previous MDC funding, provide information on previous accomplishments.

3. Project partners:

- a. List partner organizations and contact information.
- b. Describe the contribution (financially, in-kind, or volunteer) of each partner to the project. Do not include paid contractors as partners unless services are donated.

4. Staff training:

- a. Detail training needs and proposed workshops, classes, or contracted training for staff to ensure long-term management of habitat improvements.
- b. If there are no training needs for staff describe how existing staff and their knowledge will ensure long-term success in habitat management.
- c. Describe equipment needs for management of project area and how any grant-funded equipment purchases are necessary for long-term viability of the habitat improvements.

5. Project budget:

- a. Include itemized budget that indicates the source and intended use of grant funds, matching funds, and in-kind contributions (calculate the value of volunteer labor using Missouri minimum wage, \$7.50/ hour).
- b. Indicate whether partial funding would be acceptable for your proposed project.

6. Fiscal responsibility:

- a. Identify grantee fiscal agent and signature authority for grant agreement, include contact information.
- b. List nine-digit Federal Tax Id Number.
- c. Provide a list of non-profit organization's board members and officers if applicable.

7. Letters of partner commitment:

- a. If the project is located on a property not owned by the lead contact, include a letter from the property owner stating support for the project.
- b. Include other letters of support as applicable.













